

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-13 are pending in the application. Claim 8 has been cancelled. Claims 7 and 9 have been amended. Claims 1, 7, and 12 are in independent form.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

1-3. Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent 3,666,305 to Schlichter ("the '305 reference"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Examiner states that "[c]laims 8-11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." In response, Applicants have amended claim 7 to include all of the limitations of claim 7 and allowable claim 8.

Claim 7 of the above-captioned application, as amended, includes the limitation of "an auxiliary lever (22) rotatably mounted directly to said plate (3), wherein said auxiliary lever (22) is actuated by said fork (8) during coupling of said fork (8) with the lock striker (6) thereby exerting an action of thrust on said dog (9) and causing said dog (9) to couple with said fork (8), and wherein said auxiliary lever (22) is biased towards a position of detachment from said dog (9)."

The '305 reference does not disclose an auxiliary lever that is biased towards a position of detachment from a dog, as specifically required by amended claim 7 of the above-captioned application. The Examiner contends that an abutment 55 and a second arm 57 in the '305 reference are equivalent to the dog 9 and the auxiliary lever 22, respectively, in the above-captioned application. The abutment 55 and the second arm 57 are both part of the same detent means 52, which is a plural armed lever member. Clearly, the second arm 57 cannot be biased towards a position of detachment from the abutment 55 because the second arm 57 and abutment 55 are portions of the same part, i.e., the detent means 52. Thus, amended claim 7 is allowable.

Applicants have cancelled claim 8.

Claims 9-11 depend from amended claim 7 and, as such, are construed to incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim to which they refer, *see* 35 U.S.C. §112, fourth paragraph. Therefore, claims 9-11 must be read as including the limitation of an auxiliary lever that is biased towards a position of detachment from a dog. Thus, claims 9-11 are allowable.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the '305 reference be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. The Examiner states that “[c]laims 1-6, 12, and 13 are allowed.”
5. The Examiner states that “[c]laims 8-11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” In response, Applicants have amended claim 7 to include all of the limitations of claim 7 and allowable claim 8, as set forth above. Claims 9-11 depend from amended claim 7.

It is respectfully submitted that this patent application is in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment or the patent application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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